

## **Harrisonburg Bicycle & Pedestrian Committee**

### **Meeting Summary**

November 3, 2008, 5:30pm, 409 S. Main Street

Attendance: Thanh Dang (staff), Adam Fletcher (staff), Drew Williams (staff), Lee Eschelman (JMU), Len Van Wyk (citizen), Eldon Kurtz (EMU), Kai Degner (citizen), Ben Wyse (citizen), Tom Benevento (citizen), Thomas Jenkins (citizen), David Ehrenpreis (citizen)

Welcome

Old Business

1. Bicycle & Pedestrian Education Tent at International Festival, Sept 27 - The event was a success. 322 bicycle helmets were distributed for free to children and adults, bike surveys completed (analysis by Cindy Reeves), reflective lights given away, great discussion and citizen feedback. Thank you to all who helped, we hope to do this again next year.
2. Safe Routes to School – Keister Elementary – Draft of the newsletter going out to citizens living on streets affected by new sidewalk improvements was passed out to committee. Keister Elementary Principal Litner will include information in PTA newsletter. City received authorization from VDOT to begin project. Project is currently under design by City Engineer's Office and construction completion date expected for Fall 2010.
  - a. Waterman Elementary – Ms. Dang has a meeting scheduled with Waterman Elementary school principal Linda McCormick, Tonya Osinkosky of RMH Community Health, and Tom Benevento, parent and committee member, on Friday November 7 to discuss future application to VDOT's SRTS grant for Waterman.
3. Country Club Road/ S Main Street Railroad Crossing – Ms. Dang is awaiting written letter from Scot Snow, Norfolk Southern approving work (letter mailed 10/21/2008). Verbally, NS has agreed to upgrade the S Main St track's with a "flangeway filler" and to remove the chair rail (same treatment to Warsaw Ave/ S Main St crossing). The City plans to construct a 5- foot bicycle "path" that will come off the roadway, cross over the tracks at a 70 degree angle and come back into the roadway. This path will be constructed on both sides of each street. City Engineer's office has developed a cost estimate of \$78K total for improvements to be made by the City at both crossings. City Public Works is working to identify funding sources for project.
4. E Market St Sidewalk – Phase I – Project will be re-bided. Oversight will be by City Engineer's Office. This is a sidewalk project on the south side of E Market St between Burgess Road and University Blvd. Mr. Williams had applied for this VDOT Highway Safety Improvement Program grant in 2003. We expect completion of the sidewalk in 2009.

5. CDBG Projects – E Washington, Vine St, Devon Lane – Devon Lane sidewalks completed. E Washington Street sidewalks being constructed now.
6. South City Connection – City staff is working on further development of a concept to provide a multiuse path connection (with the possibility of one way transit only facilities) adjacent to I-81 between Port Republic Road and Stone Spring Road. Parks & Rec Department, Transit Department, Harrisonburg Electric Commission and JMU are all in favor of this concept. Barriers include one private property fronting Stone Spring Road, terrain and grades, a stream crossing, and possible conflict with the conservation easement in Purcell Park. Public Works staff will continue to work with partners to further develop this.
7. Priorities List – Updated Project priorities list with new project cost estimates passed out to committee members. Ms. Dang requested that committee members prepare for update of Bicycle & Pedestrian Plans, possibly combine plans into one document (the plans were last updated in 2005). The plan update will adopt projects identified in the priorities list. Ms. Dang will bring documents to work from to next committee meeting.

Additionally, the City's Comprehensive Plan update will begin in Spring 2009. Committee members are encouraged to participate in this process. Mr. Fletcher explained that goals and strategies identified by the Committee may be incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan, and that the Comprehensive Plan may reference the Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan(s).

Ms. Dang suggested that the committee work to re-evaluate the Mt. Clinton Pike Multi-Use Trail. Safety concerns were expressed regarding anticipation of additional entrances crossing the multiuse path onto the road as future development occurs. Mr. Williams and Mr. Fletcher shared that when the 2005 Bicycle Committee developed guidelines for multiuse paths that the committee at the time thought they would be appropriate for roads with speeds 35 mph or greater; to remove bicyclists from the roadway. However, given new experience, City staff and committee members now question this approach. It should be re-evaluated.

Mr. Van Wyk reiterated his idea to remove travel lanes from Mt Clinton Pike and strip the street between Rt 42 and Rt 11 as 2 travel lanes, one middle turning lane, and bicycle lanes. The volumes presently on Mt Clinton Pike are low, 8000 Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT), *VDOT Traffic Data can be found here: <http://www.virginiadot.org/info/ct-TrafficCounts.asp>*. A discussion among committee members was had. Mr. Williams explained that Mt Clinton Pike was constructed in anticipation of future growth along the corridor. Additionally, the City receives maintenance dollars from VDOT for each lane mile of road. If two travel lanes are removed (middle turning lane does not count) then the City will lose approximately \$10,000 per year in maintenance dollars that is used for maintenance of roads, sidewalks, snow & ice response, etc. It was also suggested that the lanes be examined to possibly narrow the inside lanes to make a wide curb lane (similar treatment to S Main St). Mr. Van Wyk, Mr. Jenkins, Mr. Ehrenpreis, and some committee members made comment that they felt greater benefit for the

community to adopt Mr. Van Wyk's idea and that the maintenance dollars were a small cost compared to the estimated multi-use path cost (about \$350,000). Additionally, they expressed that it would be easier for the City to require that future development consider bicycle facilities if these facilities already existed.

Mr. Fletcher pointed out that there is opportunity for the committee to develop a new Bicycle Plan, which would be adopted by City Council and referenced by the Comprehensive Plan, that describes what is required by future development along specific corridors. Similarly, to required sidewalks along specific corridors identified by the Pedestrian Committee. The committee discussed the possibility of developing a plan which identified a multi-use path that is not immediately adjacent to roadways, but that identified opportunities for paths in the back of parcels.

#### New Business

8. Bike Advocacy/Education Groups – who's who and who's doing what? – Ms. Dang shared with the committee a draft list of Bike Advocacy and Bike Education Groups. She wishes to further develop this list and post it on the City's webpage as a reference for the community. She stated that the mission of the City Bicycle & Pedestrian Committee (this group) will be to continue planning and development of project ideas and work with city staff to prioritize projects. This particular committee will not be involved in bike education initiatives, but members are welcome to participate in other groups. Ms. Dang wishes to continue her focus on bicycle education through the Harrisonburg-Rockingham Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)'s Bicycle Education Committee. The HRMPO receives federal funds and the committee has funds for education.

Mr. Benevento requested that contacts (email and/or phone numbers) also be added to the list.

9. Draft City Bicycle Route map – Ms. Dang shared a draft City Bicycle map that she has been developing with a smaller subcommittee (Mr. Ehrenpreis, Mr. Jenkins, Mr. Van Wyk, and students from JMU). This map was displayed at the International Festival and comments were also solicited. Committee members pointed out additional routes to add and corrections to be made and decided to remove W. Mosby Road from the map.

Ms. Dang suggested that steep hills be identified and be denoted by ">>>" symbols and solicits the assistance of the committee to develop proper language to describe Route Types listed in the legend. Ms. Dang shared her vision for creating a fold out map publication similar to that of Arlington County, Washington, DC, etc that may include safety information, etc and be made available at Tourist Information and bicycle shops. Mr. Benevento suggested staff review the bicycle map from Madison Wisconsin for ideas.

Route numbering was also discussed. Ms. Dang suggested that rather than have route numbers (1, 2, 3, etc) that the City should instead maintain a system of "Bike Route/Share the Road" signs

with destination signage beneath them ((see AASHTO guide, [http://www.sccrtc.org/bikes/AASHTO\\_1999\\_BikeBook.pdf](http://www.sccrtc.org/bikes/AASHTO_1999_BikeBook.pdf), page 21). This would also, she said, provide information about where a route is headed, has opportunity to have multiple destinations posted on a single sign post, and provides greater flexibility should routes and ease/difficulty of bicycling specific roads change in the future, i.e. The City has constructed new facilities for bicycle routes that were not identified on the last Bike Plan in 2005. Some members of the committee agreed, whereas other members still believed numbered routes to be helpful. There was discussion about how the 2005 Bike Plan was developed with specific routes – committee members envisioned a DC-metro style system for bicycles. Ms. Dang asked the committee members to strongly consider the pros and cons to different methods of bicycle routing before the next meeting.

It was also agreed that Route 2 signs should be removed from S Main St between Miller Circle and Port Republic Rd and “Share the Road/Bike Route” signs be installed in their place, similar to between Port Republic Road and Cantrell Ave.

#### Other Business/ Announcements

10. Bicycle & Pedestrian city webpages – [www.harrisonburgva.gov/bikeped](http://www.harrisonburgva.gov/bikeped) - This webpage has information about the committee, projects, maps, and web links to other resources.
11. College-Age focus on Bike Education – Ms. Dang continued the discussion from Item #8, that that this Committee not focus its efforts on College-Age Bike Education, but instead continue focusing on infrastructure needs. Ms. Dang will continue to work with the local universities and the MPO on this effort. Interested individuals should contact her.
12. New Bike the Valley Website from CSPDC Bike/Ped Committee – [www.bikethevalley.org](http://www.bikethevalley.org) – the Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission (CSPDC) just launched this website, which currently has web links to local resources, maps for 41 identified rides with turn by turn directions, and will later have bike tips information.
13. Old Furnace Rd, Vine St to City Limits – Mr. Jenkins requested that the Public Works Department re-examine existing conditions on Old Furnace Road and determine whether there is enough room on existing pavement to paint bicycle lanes. He believes there is enough road width for bike lanes without requiring major road improvements. Ms. Dang and Mr. Williams will present their findings to the committee at the next meeting.
14. Our Community Place – Mr. Benevento shared that Our Community Place has put in place a new wood chip path adjacent to Blacks Run. He is working further with Brad Fink, Stream Health Coordinator/ Parks & Recreation Department, on possibly extending that path behind Roses.

Adjourned at 6:45pm.

**The next Bicycle & Pedestrian Committee will meet on February 2, 2008 at 5:30pm, 409 S Main Street.**